

VLS 2020 YEAR IN REVIEW BY PRESIDENT, COLIN TAMBOLINE

Well, here we are at the end of a most unusual year. The Victoria Lily Society has been significantly affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, as have so many other clubs, businesses, families and society itself. Thankfully, most of us have had our gardens to retreat to and take solace in. Here is my summary of our activities for 2020. I think we have done as well as can be expected for any organization which has a large social component to their activities.



March – Brenda Sopow was set to chair our first meeting of the year with Ann Nightingale giving us a talk on “The Birds of Spring” on Tuesday March 24th. I was to be in Patagonia at the time, so Brenda stepped up to chair the meeting. Unfortunately, that all went out the window on March 16th, when international borders closed, and several countries went into lockdown to battle Covid-19. Joyce and I made it home, though it was very touch and go at times, but our meeting was cancelled. Ann eventually gave us her talk by Zoom on March 31st, and it was great!



April – Our April 21st, in-person meeting was also cancelled. Again, we went to a Zoom meeting format a week later with me giving my “Species Lilies” talk. We had a giant Bulletin that month with short articles on Erythroniums and Fritillarias in the garden. Brenda was looking after the HCP Lily Garden, keeping it weed free. Brenda and Louise Dixon potted up 70 lilies for sale later in the summer. They would normally have been sold at the show, but it was looking less and less likely that we would be able to have an in-person show.



May – It was now clear that in-person meetings were unlikely to occur in 2020. Our show was definitely cancelled as an in-person event. On May 26th Agnes Lynn provided us with a Zoom presentation “Integrating Native Plants into the Garden” which was very informative and well presented. We said goodbye to Mary Lou Bannister who moved to the Okanogan to be closer to family. Brenda, Louise, and I spread leaf mulch on the Lily garden at HCP.



June – In lieu of our usual show preparation meeting, Brenda organized a physically distanced garden tour and social at Wanita Bickford's on June 28th in the afternoon. I was out of commission and helping my Dad, as my Mom Doreen had a stroke June 4th and passed away on June 11th. Brenda had organized teams for ongoing maintenance at the HCP Lily Garden. Beth Ruskowski, Brenda, and I met with Thelma Brooks to organize lifting her lilies and replanting in return for getting some nice new bulbs for the HCP Lily Garden, and our auction.



July – With no meetings in July or August typically, and our July show cancelled, Brenda, Alison Farquhar, and Lea Van Stolk's husband Dan organized a "Virtual Show" using photographs of member's summer blooms. It was quite spectacular to see the flowers presented this way.



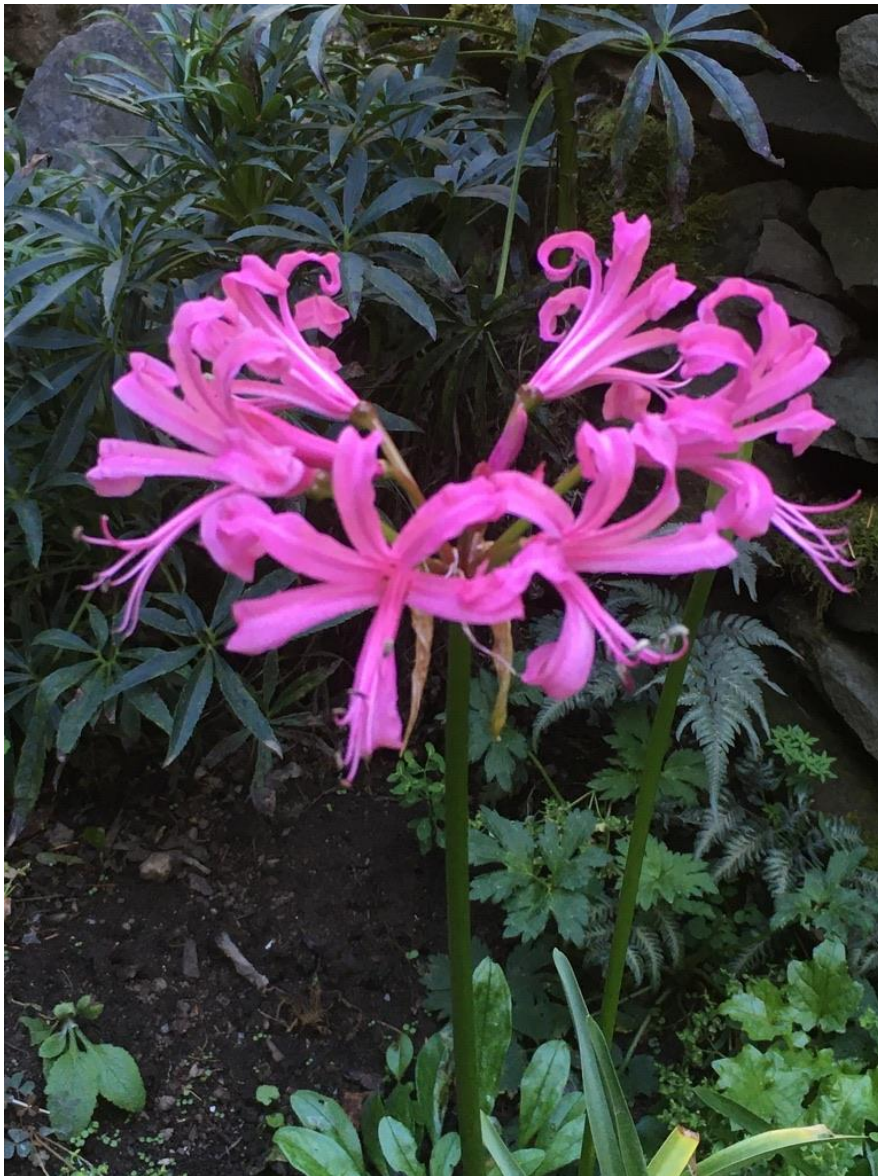
August - More weeding and tending of the HCP Lily Garden, as well as deadheading spent lily stalks. The big 'behind the scenes' undertaking was getting the club bulb orders organized. I was in charge of the bulb orders this year and was able to organize with Ieuan Evans to get some of his newly hybridized martagons as well as some old favorites, at good prices. We also had lists from the The Lily Nook, Jeffries Nursery, and The Lily Garden. Overall a huge selection at very reasonable prices was available.



September - Beautiful weather most of the month (with a bit of rain) but we had the wildfire smoke from the western US impacting our air quality. Our meeting on September 29th was on Zoom again and was a recap of the summer. I also did a demonstration of how to scale lily bulbs in order to get more plants of a particular clone. Our martagon bulbs arrived and were distributed.



October – The weather remained pretty nice (except for wet, rainy days) and hybridizers harvested seed pods. Our Lily Nook, Lily Garden, and Jeffries Nursery bulbs arrived and were distributed. We got a particularly good deal on our Lily Garden bulbs as their 40% discount effectively covered all the costs of the US dollar exchange and the shipping and phyto certificate. All of the bulbs were high quality. Brenda, Louise, Wanita, Beth and I lifted lilies at Thelma Brooks on October 6th, and then replanted her lilies in enriched soil in her raised beds. The 'extra' lilies are to be planted in the HCP Lily Garden or were used in the on-line auction. Deb Serviss, Alison Farquhar, and I organized our first on-line auction using 20 hard to get (Brian Bergman supplied several, as well as Peter Scheiman, and Thelma Brooks) or particularly impressive bulbs. The auction ran over a week and was a great success, thanks to the hard work of the auction team. Our meeting on October 27th was the first day of the auction and a chance for me to show off all the bulbs, and photos of their flowers and stems.



November - It has been mild, but our winter rains have arrived. Work started on a massive bed drainage/soil renovation project in the southern-most part of the HCP Lily Garden in October but proceeded in earnest in November. On November 16th, 17th, and 18th Beth, Louise, Brenda, and I excavated out the clay and dug drainage ditches, in which I placed 4-inch underdrains and drain rock. We then refilled the beds mixing the heaviest clay with woodchips and sand, and then the lighter 'topsoil' with compost and sand to try and make that bed more lily friendly. It was back breaking work, but may make that bed the show stopper it deserves to be!



Our AGM will be held on Zoom at 7 PM November 24th. Brenda and I will continue for another year as Vice-Chair and Chair, and Karen Madrick has agreed to stay on as Treasurer as well. Alison Farquhar has agreed to stay on as our most formidable and patient VLS Bulletin editor. We are looking for another Membership Chair as Barbara Elford is stepping down after two years in that role. I am stepping down as the Bulb Ordering Organizer and Sandra Allin has kindly agreed to take over that. At our meeting we will share part of the NALS 2017 keynote speaker lecture – Peter Zale talking about his lily hunting expeditions around the world “Lily Species around the World and in Cultivation”. His full talk is one hour, but I will edit it down to between 1/2 and 3/4 of an hour.

Hope to see you on Zoom at 7 PM on Tuesday November 24th!

